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# The University of Montana

## NEWS RELEASE

University Communications  
Missoula, MT 59812  
(406) 243-2522  
(406) 243-4520 FAX

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July 24, 1996

### UM INSTITUTE STRIVES TO ADD DEPTH TO NATURAL RESOURCE REPORTING

#### MISSOULA --

On July 27, 18 national and international journalists will embark on an eight-day odyssey to explore the varied terrain and environmental issues of western and central Montana through a unique University of Montana institute.

The UM School of Journalism's annual High Country Institute for Journalism & Natural Resources was launched last year to help print and broadcast journalists who cover natural resource and environment issues gain the background and understanding they need to provide context in their reporting, said journalism Dean Frank Allen, institute founder and director.

"The ultimate goal of the institute is to improve the quality of reporting about natural resources and the environment," said Allen, a former Wall Street Journal environment editor. "And the only way that's going to happen is if reporters are allowed time out of the newsroom to step back and get immersed in these topics."

Guided by a faculty of experts in varied fields, institute participants will gain in-depth information on such issues as the ecology of forest fires, modern mining, water quality, community cooperation, the political future of endangered species, predator-prey relationships, people pressures on national parks and the impact of a changing economy on the town of Choteau.

Stops will include UM's Lubrecht Experimental Forest and Flathead Lake Biological Station, Glacier National Park, the site of the proposed Seven Up Pete Gold Mine and a Bynum

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ranch working to restore overgrazed pasture land.

Participating journalists, who competed for fellowships that cover their expenses during the institute, represent a wide range of organizations from the Congressional Quarterly to Mother Jones. Other 1996 fellowship winners include representatives of CNN, CBS News, the Chicago Tribune, the San Francisco Chronicle and New Scientist Magazine. Two Montana newspapers and several other western U.S. publications are represented.

The institute's first outing, last summer, drew overwhelmingly positive response from the 16 participating journalists, Allen said, and it contributed to some excellent in-depth reporting that exemplifies the kind of journalism that the institute aims to encourage.

And, he said, the institute furthers the journalism school's goal of educating working journalists as well as those just learning the craft.

"It's an interesting example of what journalism education could be," Allen said.

The institute is sponsored by the American Forest Foundation and the National Parks and Conservation Association.

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**Contact:** Frank Allen, (406) 243-4001.

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Local, dailies, specialized western weeklies, Choteau, Chronicle of Higher Ed  
HiCntry.rl